



## Office Fire Safety Tips

If you work in an office building there are basic steps you should take to help ensure your safety and survival if you should ever be caught in a fire or other critical situation and you needed to evacuate the building. Every building has unique characteristics including design, construction, condition and use. As a result, these fire safety tips highlight only the basics of emergency evacuation. The State Safety Program recommends that everyone study and apply these basic tips.

### What should you know before an emergency occurs?

- Understand the building emergency evacuation plan.
- Identify and practice the way to at least two escape routes from your workstation to the designated gathering place.
- Count and remember how many desks or cubicles and doors are between your workstation and the two nearest exits, you may need to escape in the dark.
- Know where the fire and emergency reporting stations are and how to use them.
- Recognize the sights and sounds of fire and emergency evacuation alarms.
- Document who to contact and how to contact them at the time of an emergency.
- Report blocked exits and damaged or nonfunctioning building safety systems.

### What should you do in an emergency?

- Listen carefully for instructions over the building emergency public address system.
- Evacuate immediately, quickly and calmly, following posted evacuation instructions and the building emergency evacuation plan.
- Move directly to the nearest fire and smoke free exit stairwell. If the nearest stairwell is obstructed by smoke or fire, use your alternate escape route. Be aware that the only available exit route may contain limited amounts of smoke or fire.
- Crawl low under smoke to breathe cleaner air if there is a fire.
- Test doors for heat before opening them by placing the back of your hand against the door. Do not open a hot door, find an alternate exit route. Keep fire doors closed to slow the spread of smoke and fire.
- Avoid using elevators when evacuating a burning building.
- Report to the designated gathering place and make your presence known.
- Never reenter the building until directed by authorities.

### If trapped during an emergency, what should you do?

- Stay calm so you can take steps to protect yourself.
- Retreat to a place with an outside window remote from the fire, smoke or emergency situation and telephone for help if possible.
- Stuff clothing, towels or papers in cracks around doors to prevent smoke from entering your space.
- Remain where rescuers can see you and wave a bright-colored cloth or other conspicuous object to attract attention.
- Open a window if possible, but be prepared to close it should smoke enter your space. Avoid breaking windows.